

LAKE EOLA PARK
195 North Rosalind Avenue
Orlando
Orange County
Florida

HALS FL-7
FL-7

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

FIELD RECORDS

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY

LAKE EOLA PARK

HALS NO. FL-7

Location: 195 North Rosalind Avenue, Orlando, Orange County, Florida
Lat: 28.543944 Long: -81.373042

Significance: Lake Eola is historically significant for its contribution to the broad patterns of Orlando history, specifically for the pattern of events beginning in the late 19th century that precipitated the development of the central business district. The historical development of the Orlando central business district occurred on the west of Lake Eola into a dense urban core and associated growth spread around Lake Eola, with the lake and its surrounding land serving as the "central park" of Orlando. Lake Eola is associated with the earliest years of Orlando serving as its central park and has persisted to the present functioning as the green heart of the city, Orange County, and Central Florida.

History: Lake Eola Park has been a recreational destination since the 1880's, officially becoming a park in 1892. Since then it has been the site of county fairs, horse racing, boating, and concert events. Now covering over 40 acres it has become the central park and an icon of the city of Orlando.

The lake was purchased in 1800's by Jacob Summerlin for 25 cents an acre; and in 1883 the lake and 60 feet of right of way was donated to the City to be used as a horse track. Over the years surrounding property owners donated additional land including: JP Musselwhite, Mayor E. Frank Sperry, and St Luke's Cathedral of South Florida. The area has been used as a fairgrounds and the first zoo in Orlando.

The park consists of 43 acres of total space of which 23 acres is water. The lake averages 15 ft in depth with its deepest at 40 ft near the main fountain. Installed in 1957, the fountain in the middle of the lake sprays up 6400 gallons of water, and has been used as a logo for the City of Orlando on in various ways, including street name signs. In August of 2009 the fountain was struck by lightning and is currently being evaluated to determine its future.

Sources: City of Orlando, Parks and Recreation, Website:
http://www.cityoforlando.net/fpr/net/t_ParkRec.aspx?Park=062

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Historians: September 14, 2009

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